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THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS?—The dyeing bee—circa 1898—was a "gala" all-day event that brought the village ladies together for bark breaking, berry crushing and long hours of workk . . . and created

happy, smiling faces as you can see. Today, dependable home dyes, automatic washers, and pretty colors have changed the whole picture.

## *Color It 'Easy' When Dyeing Today*

Drab, snuff, liver and sad-color were the fetching shades that once were available to women who wanted to do a bit of dyeing.

With the advent of a dependable home dye some 50 years ago and improvements in washing machines and color choices, the housewife today can often create what amounts to a homemaker's miracle with a dye job on rugs, drapes, slip covers or in varying wardrobes.

But it wasn't always so. The ladies once gathered together in groups for a village dyeing bee and followed home recipes like these:

Use approximately one peck of plant material, or one pound of nut hulls, wood or bark. Provide a kettle large enough

to hold at least four gallons of water and a pound of wool, without crowding. Also have one or more tubs or pails on hand for rinsing. Use rain water if possible. Add rust from old nails or kettles or "chamberlye" to set the color.

Natural dyes had been used for centuries and during the 19th century and early 20th century the commercial invention and use of synthetic dyes grew spectacularly. There were some for use in the home, but limited until in 1915, Charles C. Huffman set to work in a Chicago shop with one enamel pot and a new idea.

By 1916 his idea was a reality and he began to sell a soap cake dye that washed and dyed all at the same time. Snuff and drab

were replaced with emerald green, canary yellow and bright red. Refinements have since eliminated or minimized the old boiling-to-set-the-color routine, too.

Now homemakers can choose from dozens of colors and can dye in a washing machine or a basin with a minimum of time and not very much effort—but you still have to watch those splashes! They have to be cleaned up each and every one.